

**USDA Secretary's Hispanic Advisory Council (HAC) Meeting**  
**Monday November 25, 2002, 9:30 – 4:00**  
**USDA Room 4916, Washington, DC**  
**Minutes**

[www.usda.gov/da/Hispanic](http://www.usda.gov/da/Hispanic)

**Convene:** Humberto Hernandez, Co-Chair opened the meeting at approximately 9:30 a.m. on November 25.

Opening Remarks: Hernandez welcomed everyone and requested self-introductions for the benefit of all the members since several in attendance were new members. Hernandez briefly gave an overview of the HAC and the Diversity Advisory Council and the other employee advisory councils.

In addition, Hernandez mentioned that one of the things we have focused on is that the work we do is credible and accountable. In an effort to do that we take copious notes and follow up with action items to get organized and accountable. One of the challenges he has charged the group with is for the HAC to start thinking strategically. His expectations are that we make a difference.

**Attendees List**

**Members:**

Humberto Hernandez, Co-Chair  
Todd Ferrara, Office of the Secretary (OSEC)  
Michael Molina, OSEC White House Liaison  
Ricardo Krajewski, Marketing and Regulatory Programs (M&RP)  
Edgardo Delgado, Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services (FFAS)  
Irma Lawrence, Research, Education and Economics (REE)  
Frances Wilches, Food Safety  
Jose Acevedo, Natural Resources and Environment (NRE)  
Rick Chavez, Hispanic Employees Organizations (HEO)  
Enrique Perez, Rural Development

**Alternates:**

Jackie Rodriguez, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS)  
Manuel Ayala, HEO

**Advisors:**

Maria Goldberg, Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI) National Program  
Sean Clayton, HEPM Council

**Staff:**

Alicia Rodriguez, HAC Executive Assistant

**Guests:**

Dr. Donald Hinman, Agricultural Marketing Service

**Approval and Administrative Issues:** Alicia Rodriguez reported that the minutes had been sent out via e-mail to all HAC members for review. Hearing a motion from Edgardo Delgado and a second to the motion from Irma Lawrence, the minutes were approved.

Maria Goldberg mentioned that the information under the HSI Student Initiative update was incorrect and would provide Rodriguez with an accurate statement to be included in these minutes. [Action Item 14](#)

**Registered Action Items:**

Rodriguez provided a copy of the registered action items for fiscal year 2003, which includes pending items from fiscal year 2002. Date and progress of action items were discussed.

For action item 2 which requests number of HACU hires by agency, Goldberg is preparing the White House Report on Education Excellence for Hispanic Americans that contains this information and will provide us a copy of the report by mid December.

[Action Item 2](#)

For action item 3 that requests an invitation of USDA Hispanic officials to HAC meetings, Manuel Ayala mentioned since he is now the official Hispanic Employees Organization (HEO) representative he will be taking a more pro-active approach. However, for planning purposes in inviting officials he suggests that once HAC meetings are set that we keep to the schedule. [Action Item 3](#)

For action item 5, Ricardo Krajewski will provide an update to the HAC on the initiative to having more Hispanic representation in the Office of Communications. Ricardo, will follow up with a letter. This needs to be included in our business plan. [Action Item 5](#)

For action item 8, Lawrence will provide language to incorporate an education component in our business plan by 1/10/03. [Action Item 8](#)

**Revisit the Issue of Meeting with the Secretary:** Hernandez suggested that we check with Elsa Murano to see if she can schedule a meeting in advance with the Secretary. The entire HAC agreed to raise the Secretary's awareness and create a positive meeting to which we present to the Secretary what our charge is, what we are all about, what we have accomplished, information where we are in USDA, and recommendations on what we can do to help. Hernandez emphasized that the HAC needs to have documents in final with a message concisely in a one-page cover. Rodriguez indicated that one of the issues we need to start looking at is employment and the effects of the Department of Homeland Security. If several APHIS employees transfer, how is USDA going to look in terms of employment since APHIS Hispanic employment profile is 14.8%. Rodriguez will schedule a meeting with Murano. Hernandez requested that Rodriguez work with appropriate HAC members to assure that appropriate documents to be presented to the Secretary are completed prior to meeting with her. [Action Item 15, 28](#)

**Hispanic Employment Directives:** Rodriguez provided the HAC members with a copy of the Decision Memorandum for the Secretary on USDA Hispanic Employment, with sample letters to the Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, Agency Heads and USDA employees implementing the President's Executive Order 13171: Hispanic Employment in the Federal government. The HAC presented this to the DAC during the September 10, 2002 meeting, requesting the DAC forward the Decision Memorandum to the Secretary for a decision. However, it was requested that the HAC reword it and present it so that it addresses diversity. Goldberg agreed to reword the memos. Acevedo agreed to assist her. Hernandez requested Goldberg contact Don Arnette, Co-Chair, African American Employee Advisory Council for input with a courtesy copy to Murano and Hernandez by 12/4/02. An advance copy will be sent to the DAC prior to their 12/10/02 meeting. At this meeting, Hernandez will request that they forward the memos to the Secretary. [Action Item 16](#)

**Business Plan Update:** Hernandez indicated that Gil Sandate and Rick Chavez were the lead members on the business plan. However, Sandate has transferred out of USDA and Chavez has been appointed by the Secretary to serve as the Career Co-Chair to the American Indian/Alaskan Native Employee Advisory Council. Therefore, in fiscal year 2003 Acevedo will take the lead. Ayala and Lawrence will help with the follow through. In terms of staffing, Hernandez offered the assistance of Mike Gonzalez, an employee on his staff. Hernandez also stated that Gonzalez was invaluable in helping draft the first plan. Everyone needs to provide input especially in their mission area so that it is an institutionalized process and personally visit with the mission areas and outline where they are. [Action Item 4](#)

The following attendees suggested that the following items need to be incorporated into the business plan:

- The language of the Human Capital Plan (Goldberg)
- Actions and results need to be updated, especially the initiatives from the HAC proposals (Hernandez)
- HAC allocation needs to be accounted for (Hernandez)
- The initiative to having more Hispanic representation in the Office of Communications (Krajewski)
- Include actions that will result in data that supports what the HAC is doing (Krajewski)
- Action items that reflect data on accomplishments of mission areas and agencies in addressing Hispanic representation in USDA with starting and ending dates (Krajewski)

**FY 2002 HAC Annual Report to the Secretary:** The HAC members provided their final comments to the annual report. It was suggested a statement in the executive summary include the impact, outcome and the number of customers and potential candidates we were able to reach. Rodriguez, Frances Wilches, and Sean Clayton will provide the language. [Action Item 17](#)

In addition, the HAC suggested FY 2002 versus FY 2001 Hispanic employment data charts. Rodriguez and Krajewski will develop the charts. [Action Item 18](#)

**Budget Update:** Wilches gave an update along with a handout of the fiscal year 2002 budget. The HAC was able to expend most the funds with a few exceptions due to limited administrative support. See attachment for further information.

Wilches also stated that the HAC was able to use last minute funds to place a half page advertisement in the *Latinos on Wheels* publication.

**Budget Proposals for FY 2003 Criteria:** Rodriguez provided by e-mail the guidelines, criteria and helpful hints information. Several of the members had ideas for proposals. Hernandez encouraged members to share the proposal guidelines with their contacts. Proposals need to be submitted to Rodriguez by December 16. A subcommittee will then review and prioritize proposals and present them to the HAC. Jackie Rodriguez, will chair the subcommittee. Clayton, Enrique Perez, and Delgado will serve on the committee. Final Proposals are due to the DAC by January 17, 2003. Rodriguez will re-send the proposal guidelines and criteria and include a copy of last years approved proposals. [Action Item 19, 20](#)

**HAC Exhibit Update:** Rodriguez presented the draft graphic design of the exhibit that Kelly Smith developed incorporating our previous comments. The HAC members provided the following additional comments:

- Insert replacement photo (for one deleted) in the blue empty space of the globe
- Make sure letters/words are in contrast with the orange/yellow background
- Increase the font size and use darker color for the "The Secretary's Hispanic Advisory Council"
- Make sure color combinations comply with and receive the Office of Communication's approval.
- Use a larger font size for the mission areas
- The words "Doors are Open to Careers that Make a World of Difference" should contrast more with the background.

Lawrence will provide the comments to Rodriguez so that she may forward to Smith.  
[Action Item 21](#)

**Hispanic Employment Initiatives:** A report was not provided due to scheduling conflicts, as advisors from the Office of Human Resources were unable to attend.

**HSI Student Initiative Update:** Goldberg provided an update and final report to the HAC. See attachment for further information.

**Online Horticulture & Business Training for Non-English Speakers:** Guest speaker Dr. Donald Hinman, Agricultural Marketing Service, presented information on a new multimedia approach to training Hmong farmers and small business owners with limited English-speaking ability. Hinman is seeking opportunities to collaborate with Extension services and other outreach agencies to expand the number of slide shows, and to work

with additional languages, particularly Spanish to create a network of multimedia training opportunities for underserved groups with limited English literacy.

Discussion: One of the President's Management Agenda Initiative is e-Gov. This would be a good initiative and in e-Learning. In addition, there are several Hispanic Employee Organizations (HEO's) who would like to collaborate to offer some of their services. Manuel will provide him with some names and contacts on these initiatives.

Action Item 22

Hernandez's thoughts are on the potential in working with the different agencies in the implementation of the farm bill where it has limited and resource farmers.

Rodriguez will provide a copy of the written information to the HEPM's on behalf of the HAC. And will include the link [www.uwex.edu/ces/hmong](http://www.uwex.edu/ces/hmong) to our web site and suggest this to the DAC. This is another tool that might be considered in outreaching to the Hispanic community. For further information, individuals may contact Dr. Hinman at (202) 690-0265 or by e-mail at [Donald.Hinman@usda.gov](mailto:Donald.Hinman@usda.gov). Action Item 23

The HAC thanked Dr. Hinman for his informative presentation.

**Recognition of former HAC members:**

Hernandez mentioned that Sandate had unfortunately left USDA before we could honor him for his contributions to the HAC as a member and as the alternate Co-Chair. Sandate accepted a position with the Library of Congress as the Director, Office of Workforce Diversity.

In addition, Chavez has been appointed by the Secretary to serve as the Career Co-Chair to the American Indian/Alaskan Native Employee Advisory Council in which he has graciously accepted, thus he will no longer serve as the HEO representative; Ayala will now serve as the representative versus the alternate. The HAC thanked Chavez for all his hard work and looks forward to working with him on opportunities that both Councils can work on.

The HAC agreed to have a luncheon for both former members recognizing them for their contributions. The luncheon will take place at the Secretary's Dinning Room on January 7, 2003 from 12:00 noon until 1:00 p.m.

Since the alternate Co-Chair remains vacant due to Sandate's transfer, the HAC agreed to the following alternate Co-Chairs: First alternate, Krajewski; Second alternate, Acevedo.

Rodriguez will prepare letters of appointment, request for nominations and certificates of appreciation to the appropriate individuals. Action Item 24

**Hispanic Employee Organizations:** Chavez mentioned that item DPM-252, which provides guidance to agencies in their dealings with professional associations and other organizations was brought to the attention of the HAC by an HEO. The HEO suggests that each of the Employee Advisory Councils should submit a joint recommendation to

the Secretary that DPM-252 be rescinded and employee resource groups be supported as the “field cadre” for the Diversity Councils. Since the rest of the members had not had a chance to review the directive, it was suggested it be tabled for now and discussed at the next HAC meeting. Hearing a motion from Ayala and a second motion from Delgado the item was approved for discussion at the next HAC meeting. Chavez will provide an e-mail copy of the DPM-252 to Rodriguez, she will then share with the HAC members.

Action Item 25

**Other Announcements:**

**Future HAC Meetings:** The HAC agreed to schedule regular meetings the first Thursday of every month for the next six months, from 12:30-4:30, with the exception of the January meeting. The following is the schedule of meetings.

January 7, 12:00-1:00- Lunch at the Secretary’s Dinning Room. Sandate and Chavez will be the honored guests.

HAC meeting - 1:00-4:30 Room 4916-South

February 6, 12:30-4:30, Room 4916-South

March 6, 12:30-4:30, Room 4916-South

April 3, 12:30-4:30, Room 4916-South

May 1, 12:30-4:30, Room 4916-South

June 5, 12:30-4:30, Room 4916-South

**Public Service Leaders (PSL) Program:** Goldberg mentioned that 14 scholars have been selected for Spring 2003. This is the first class. Goldberg mentioned that the PSL program was modeled after a project that was developed for and provided to USDA by Hernandez in 1993. Most of the scholars will be out in the field offices but will be coming to Washington, DC for an orientation in January and meeting with their Administrators and Under Secretary. Hernandez was delighted to hear the news. He mentioned that back in 1993 he was selected to participate in the SESCO and his project that he had developed was one that would mirror the 1890 scholars program.

**USDA/OPM Agreement:** Ayala informed the HAC that in order to encourage USDA agencies to use the bilingual-bicultural supplementary examining method provided in the Luevano consent decree, USDA entered into a one-time \$75,000 reimbursable agreement with OPM’s Employment Service, with funds provided by the HAC in FY 2000. Manuel also suggested that we inquire about the status of this initiative. If the money has not been expended, the HAC would like to consider other options of expending the funds, if appropriate. Rodriguez will provide an update. Action Item 26

**Agricultural Census:** Chavez would like NASS to provide the HAC with information on how the agricultural census preparation is coming along. Hispanics are going to be severely undercounted. Agencies have a Hispanic Program Radio Network announcement, it is important we get something out. We need a one pager to get to the NASS administrator. It was suggested that Rick transfer his information to Manuel for follow-up. Ayala will meet with Rafael Sanchez, NASS Civil Rights Director, to discuss

our issues and recommendations. If necessary, Lawrence the REE representative and Hernandez will meet with the Administrator. [Action Item 27](#)

**HSI:** Goldberg informed that HAC that Montgomery Community College is now an HSI.

**Adjournment:** Hearing a first motion from Delgado and a second from Perez, the meeting adjourned at approximately 3:50 p.m.